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THE NESBITT DIE VARIETIES.

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE "THREE CENT ROSE" OF 1864.

By V. M. Berthold.

(Being slightly abridged by C. A. Howes from a paper read before the Boston Philatelic Society on April 19, 1904.)

So many highly instructive and interesting papers have recently been read before this Society, that at the outset I may frankly confess I doubt if the subject with which I shall deal will prove attractive. This doubt is strengthened because I am well aware that, among the large body of philatelists, the collectors and students of United States envelopes are at present a small minority. With such a drawback at the commencement, therefore, I ask you to be lenient in your judgment.

I freely admit that at first sight the dies of the THREE CENTS ROSE of 1864 are extremely troublesome and discouraging. That many die varieties exist has long been known to collectors, but with the exception of Harrison I cannot recall the name of any person who has had sufficient courage to undertake the systematic classification of the varieties. That gentleman being a fine scholar and a sublime enthusiast, collected many thousand specimens of these envelopes, and with a wonderful degree of patience and perseverance, attempted to bring order out of a well-nigh hopeless confusion. Great credit is due him, and if there had been other collectors like him our knowledge of this die would not have remained a matter of speculation up to the present moment.

Instead of ranking as minor varieties which are thought not worthy of special mention in any of the standard catalogues, the collectors of United States envelopes and philatelists at large should prize the THREE CENTS ROSE as one of the most interesting dies issued by the United States Post Office. In my humble opinion it deserves a special chapter in the Annals of United States Philately. Should I succeed in forcing that conclusion upon you by laying before you the few shreds of information that I have gathered, I shall consider myself well repaid for an arduous labor of many months.

To prove the assertion that our knowledge of the 1864 Three Cents Nesbitt die has been extremely limited, and that even the modicum of knowledge which has been published was of little use, let me quote a few lines from the classical publication known to philatelists as "The Stamped Envelopes, Wrappers and Sheets of the United States," a work which embodies the labor and knowledge of three experts, Messrs. Tiffany, Bogert and Rechert. Turning to page 23 of the 1902 publication, we read:

"So few collectors will be interested in looking for these, [*i. e* minor varieties] that it has been thought unnecessary to devote space to them in a general work."

With this rather sweeping and categorical statement, the case is dismissed from court, while the Two Cents Jackson die is favored with a detailed description of the twenty then known varieties, and the 1861 Three Cents Nesbitt is honored with an enumeration of ten minor varieties with differences in measurement amounting frequently to one-half of a millimeter or less.

I do not wish to create the impression that these gentlemen have failed to notice decided differences in the 1864 Three Cents Nesbitt die. On the contrary they have carefully recorded a number of differences. However, I must frankly confess that I did not read their remarks until quite recently, and many months after I had finished my studies and evolved the system of die differentiation which I shall attempt to elucidate.

Speaking of the Three Cents Nesbitt 1864 die (or Die 26 of the Envelope Catalogue) the compilers state: "It has hitherto not been noticed that there are a large number of minor varieties of this die, depending on the relative position of their parts," and then proceed to note how these may be detected by stretching a thread or using a straight edge across certain parts of the design. Omitting these suggestions by the commentators, they conclude: "These all point to different transfers from the original die, as

a number of working dies must have been required for use simultaneously. Nineteen of such varieties at least exist, and might be tabulated."

From this abundant material, the student desiring broader and more accurate knowledge was left to follow his own inclinations. It is evident, therefore, that these gentlemen had indicated various paths which the student of philately might select as a starting point, but that whatever differences had been noted appeared to the compilers trivial and unimportant.

A natural query is: Why was it thought of sufficient interest to collectors to note carefully in a general work a multitude of varieties of other Nesbitt dies, and treat Die 26 with such scant consideration? Is it not logical to assume that if these gentlemen had known one simple method or means of differentiating the various dies, they would have accorded it full and adequate recognition? Indeed, to the lack of an intelligent and uniform system and the necessity of explaining the various dies by lengthy verbal description, combined with minute measurements (that seldom agree if attempted twice by the same person) is due our present ignorance of these important die varieties.

Having stated briefly the information that was available concerning Die 26 when I approached the subject, I now propose to prove:

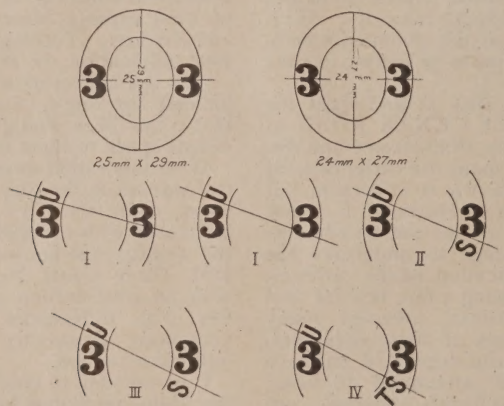
1st. That by the use of a simple line tracing, the 1864 Three Cents Nesbitt dies can easily be differentiated into four distinct varieties.

2nd. That each variety by the further use of a unit distance measurement can readily and with absolute certainty again be divided into four distinct minor varieties.

3rd. That this method lends itself equally well to the differentiation of a number of hitherto unknown Nesbitt die varieties.

4th. That this method enables us not only to find all such die varieties as have been recorded hitherto, but also furnishes us the *raison d'etre* of their existence.

5th. That the measurement of exact line distances between parts of a die (fractions of a millimeter as a rule), the bane of all students of philately, can now be dispensed with and may be replaced by a unit distance measurement of TEN MILLIMETERS.



No. 1.

6th. That the use of what may be termed a uniform system for the differentiation of die varieties cannot fail to add new zest to the study of philately, and last, but not least, will increase our general knowledge of the various issues of United States envelopes, and most probably also of adhesive stamps.

Let us take up these propositions seriatim.

When called upon to write the Third Issue of Messrs. Bartels & Co's. Catalogue of the Envelopes of the United States, I was at the outset confronted with the absence of any definite method for recognizing the varieties of the early issues. Those among you who have

studied the literature concerning these issues will bear me out in the statement that, with regard to the Jackson dies inscribed U. S. Postage or U. S. Post, the THREE CENTS (both pink and rose) and the rest of these dies that differ from the latter only by the change of the numeral, it is apparent that the commentators have worked haphazard. They have recorded whatever varieties they noticed, but no systematic classification has ever been attempted. Furthermore, on account of the extremely small dimensions employed for differentiating the various die varieties, the measurements given are useless, for no two persons will measure ¾mm. or ½mm. twice alike. Finally, the verbal description of such varieties is entirely too vague for any practical purpose. What, for instance, constitutes a "heavy middle" to your mind or mine, and what is the standard by which you or I may judge that a character is "slender" and "even" or "too large"?

The problem then, as I found it, was to ascertain:

1st. If characteristics exist which would enable us to establish certain general classes;

2nd. To devise a simple method of differentiating these general classes into minor varieties, and to do this by eliminating intricate verbal description and minute measurements.

In other words, to find ways and means to enable the collector to recognize with comparatively little trouble the various die varieties of the Nesbitt issue.

The system which I have adopted for the differentiation of the various Nesbitt dies issued between 1861 and 1864 may be described as "line prolongation or tracing combined with a uniform distance measurement of 10mm." I am pleased to note that the first plan has been alluded to by Messrs. Tiffany, Bogert & Rechert, and had the suggestion been followed out the main classes or die varieties of Die 26 would have been known years ago. As it was, these gentlemen found the key-note, but did not get the chord. Moreover, there is no intimation contained in their statements which would lead the reader to single out this method as one promising better results than any of the other observations, nor to induce the student to guess that a mere line tracing would immediately show four fundamental and important die varieties.

No. 2.

Looking at illustration No. 1 you will see five cuts representing the various positions which the letter U of UNITED STATES has in Die 26. Take a straight edge and lay it close along the outside stroke of U nearest the figure 3 and note when the prolongation of that line cuts the right portion of the die. In the first place the line may strike near the centre of the figure 3, or somewhat below it. For all practical purposes I have classified all dies where the prolongation

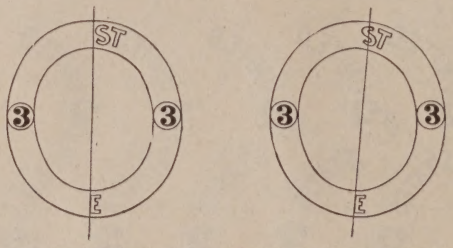
strikes within any portion of the figure 3, as Class or Variety 1. As soon as the line touches the bottom of the figure 3 we have Class 2. Again if the line lies below the figure 3, but does not fall within the S of CENTS, we have Class 3; and finally, if the line falls within any part of S or even before S, we have Class 4.

There is not a specimen of Die 26 in existence that cannot at once be classified under these 4 general classes, and in the the vast majority of specimens it is the work of but a few moments to decide to which class any stamp belongs. While such classification answers well for a general catalogue, it would not satisfy the student who desires to know the minor die varieties.

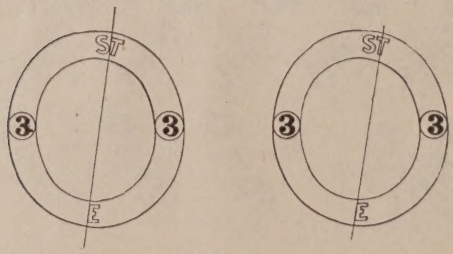
utterly discouraged by continual failures that I decided to drop the whole matter. I allude to my struggle because many of you may be engaged in similar discouraging inquiries, and may draw renewed vigor and inspiration from a demonstration which proves that painstaking labor is bound to count in the end.

I have stated before that each of the four main dies can again be sub-classified into several distinct minor varieties. This is readily accomplished by a uniform distance measurement, in a straight line, of TEN MILLIMETERS, choosing a definite point on the die as our zero and noting where the 10mm. line stops.

The solution of the problem is shown in illustration No. 2. After a great many trials, I noticed that each of the four



Method of finding the varieties of 3 cents pink, 1861.



No. 3.

Simple as the matter may appear to those who have but a superficial knowledge of Die 26, the classification of the minor varieties has required the labor of several months. Apparently there was a chaotic condition that mocked any attempt at classification. Whenever I thought I had detected a clue, it became necessary to verify its usefulness or uselessness by a close examination of several thousand envelopes. Such examination included making from two to four measurements for each specimen, recording the figures, compiling and comparing them. To my certain knowledge I have tried at least five different methods of classification, and I am not ashamed to admit that more than once I was so

words of the inscription approximate 10mm., and the thought occurred to me to ascertain if, by the use of a uniform measurement of 10mm. the different varieties could be classified. The result far surpassed my expectation and, as the measurement is simple, I see no reason why the system should not be adopted by collectors unless someone can offer a better solution.

To measure UNITED place the point of a divider or surcharge measurer, set at 10mm., on the end of the first limb of U and note for each specimen under consideration where the imaginery 10mm. line stops. We thus discover 4 distinct minor varieties.

Variety I of UNITED is character-

ized by the fact that the end of the 10mm. line touches the *middle* of the upper horizontal stroke of E. Please note also the *wide* spacnig of letters, especially N and I.

In the next variety the 10mm. line stops at the *end* of the upper horizontal stroke of E; letters N and I are decidedly *close*, but the final D occupies a relatively different position as regards E.

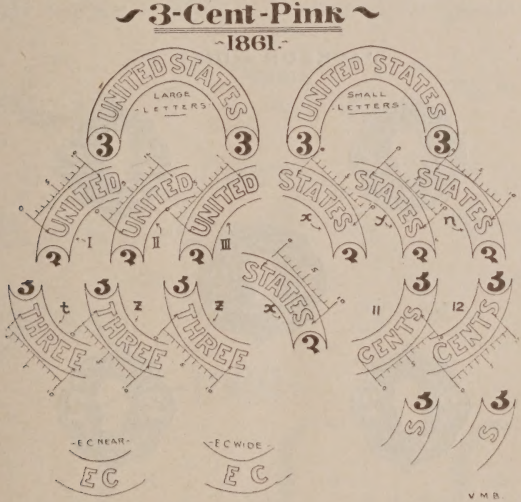
The third variety is marked by the *wide* distance between E and D; consequently the 10mm. line stops between these letters.

There are two distinct types of Variety 4. All letters are spaced *closely;* the 10mm. line touches the top of letter D, while in the sub-variety letters E and D are joined at the bottom.

recognized. With very little imagination the word reads "ST ATES." The T is placed very *close* to S, leaving a wide space between these letters and the rest of the word. Applying the 10mm. measurement we see that the end of the line touches the middle of the last S.

The word THREE appears to have been the spoilt child of the die makers. I have succeeded in establishing three distinct varieties which are represented by the letters *f*, *t* and *z*. The zero point for the measurement is taken at the lower end of the vertical stroke of T.

Commencing with *f*, letters HR are very *close* and their vertical strokes are nearly parallel. Note also that the two EE's are *close*. The 10mm. measure-



No. 4.

For the word STATES I have chosen as the zero point the left end of the horizontal top stroke of the first T. One measurement reveals three minor varieties which I have designated as *x*, *y* and *n*.

Type *x* is distinguished by the *close* spacing of letters TATES. On account of the crowding of these letters the end of the 10mm. line falls outside the final S. The initial S may be either near or far from the rest of the word. In a sub-variety, which is rare, the lower end of the initial S has a spur. You will also note the heaviness of the type.

In variety *y* the 10mm. line touches the end of the final S. Letters STA are spaced *widely*, and in a sub-variety letters TA are *very wide* at the top.

The last variety, called *n*, is easily ment, taken from the end of T, touches the end of the lower horizontal stroke of the final E. This variety is the rarest. The next variety, indicated by letter *t*, has three different forms depending upon the position of the several letters. The first is characterized by the wide distance between T and H. In the second the letters HR and E are drawn apart, but T and H are closer. In the third letter R slants off decidedly, making the distance between these two letters much wider at the bottom than at the top. In all three instances the 10mm. measurement reaches to the middle of the lower bar of final E. Variety *z* of THREE is very similar to Variety *n* of STATES. The word may easily be read Th (eodore?) Ree. In my opinion it is one of the rarest varieties.

Due to the extremely wide spacing between H and R, the 10mm. line touches the vertical stroke of letter E. Finally, I call your attention to another form of the *z* type in which the two EE's are far apart.

Lastly try the word CENTS. As the lower portion of letter C is a half circle, the measurement is taken at the end of the vertical stroke of C. As with the others, the word CENTS has also three varieties which are indicated by figures *10*, *11* and *12*, which correspond approximately to the real length of the word expressed in millimeters. In the first variety all letters are extremely *close;* in the second, N and T are *wide* at the bottom; in the third, all letters are *widely* spaced.

Of course in addition to these distinct types, the specialist can still find other minor varieties, but from a careful examination of some thousand envelopes, I feel reasonably sure that all existing minor varieties can be brought under the various classes which I have described.

At the beginning I stated that this die is so puzzling because the spaces between the words, and the distances between the latter and the figure 3, vary greatly in specimens that are otherwise identical. Being convinced that these variations are due to accident, and that any classification of Die 26 including this feature would cause only useless complications, I have thought it advisable to pay no special attention to the mere shifting of the words. I do not advise the general collector of entire envelopes to pay any attention to these differences, but I think that the specialist should possess at least one specimen of the distance varieties.

I consider it my duty, however, to inform you that Mr. Harrison's 20 varieties are all based on the various distances that intervene between the inscriptive words and the numerals, to find any specimen of which you must make four measurements. It is strange that Mr. Harrison did not perceive that the distances vary so greatly that of 100 specimens probably 99 are different. I make this statement advisedly and assure you that I have tried the experiment. In my opinion all such measurements are a waste of time and useless, and it is for this reason (as I have stated before) that I have paid no attention whatever to the varying distances between the words and the figures of value.

So far I have not said a word about the size of Die 26, or more correctly speaking, the various sizes. I remember well my surprise when first I measured the dimensions of some dozen specimens which I had examined. Indeed, I mistrusted my results, for I had reasoned that such an important feature would have been noted long ago in the Standard Catalogue, the same as Die 1 and Die 2 of the TWO CENTS Jackson. Having satisfied myself of the correctness of these measurements, I turned to the publication of Messrs. Tiffany, Bogert and Rechert, where I found the following note:

"The design is an oval, 24½ to 25½ by 28 to 29½mm."

I suggest that henceforth the Scott Catalogue should classify the 3c Rose as Die 1 and Die 2, the former including all stamps measuring 24 by 27mm., and the lat-

ter those measuring 25 by 29mm. Certainly if the TWO CENTS Jackson is catalogued as Die 1 and Die 2, there is *no* reason *whatever* why the THREE CENTS ROSE should not be treated likewise. And while I speak of this matter, I would also suggest that the Scott's Catalogue should change the measurements of the Jackson die as follows:

Die 1 to embrace all stamps measuring from 24 to 25mm.

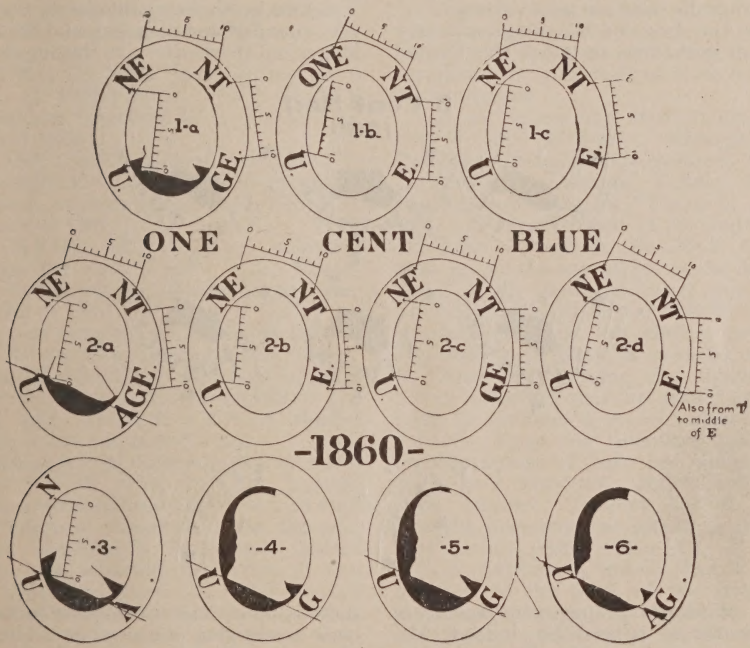
Die 2 to embrace all stamps measuring from 25½ to 26¼mm.

Another and equally necessary change in the Standard Catalogue is required for the distinction of the first and second quality of the buff paper which was officially introduced for envelopes bearing the impression of the THREE CENTS Rose. It is strange that this important point has been overlooked by the cataloguers, especially as the facts are clearly stated in the "Historical Notes." Quoting from the latter:

"A circular letter from the Finance Office, dated Washington, Oct. 1866, signed A. N. Zevely, 3d Asst. P. M. G., says:

'Letter size envelopes stamped 3 cents, made of a cheaper quality of paper than those heretofore furnished, are furnished by the Department at $32.80 per 1000.'"

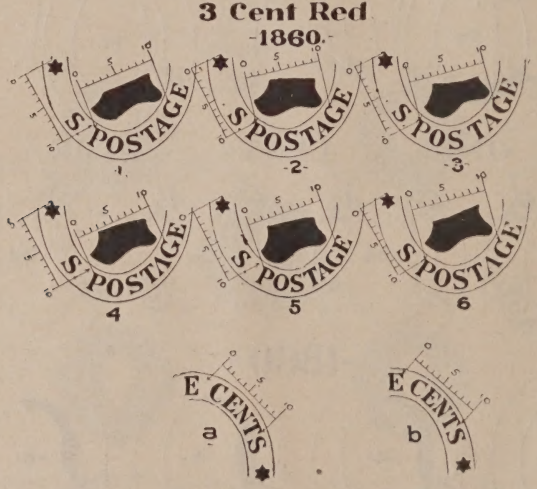
Also, "The schedule of 1867 gives the prices of three cent envelopes, etc., and of letter size *second* quality buff." A circular to the public of the same date says that "letter size *second* quality are furnished *only* in buff." In other words, just as in the Reay issue the Department acknowledges amber and amber second quality, which the Standard Catalogue calls A and A³, so the buff paper of the THREE CENTS Rose must be distinguished as B and B³, and I have inserted this change in the revised catalogue soon to be issued by the Bartels' Company.



Before leaving Die 26 I must call your attention to the most convincing evidence which proves that, instead of cataloguing varieties, we should recognize and catalogue several independent dies of which each appears in a number of distinct varieties. I lay stress upon this point because people not fully acquainted with the subject may contend that the multiplication of varieties merely tends to complicate a collection and is of little value. To guard against any misunderstanding I will illustrate my assertion by citing a parallel case, choosing a United States adhesive stamp. Among collec-

tors the presence or absence of secret marks on otherwise exact duplicate stamps is deservedly recognized as another die and is so catalogued. Again, the mere addition of a dash under the tip of the ornament at right of numeral (as in the second issue of the ONE CENT BLUE of 1861) entitles the latter to be known as another stamp. But if the presence or absence of a little curved line, a dash, or merely a strengthening of a line is sufficient for separate cataloguing of a United States stamp, I ask you whether or not the appearance of a different bust on an otherwise similar stamp is equally entitled to classification as another die, and not as a variety?

That the bust of Washington is very different in the first series of the United



States envelopes prepared by Nesbitt is well known to specialists; indeed, Mr. Harrison has drawn 18 different busts which he finds exist on the five dies of the Three Cents Red (issued from Sept. 1853 to Sept. 1860). I doubt, however, that many collectors know that in Die 26 the bust of Washington also shows the use of at least two entirely different original dies. This important matter is mentioned in a note by Messrs. Tiffany, Bogert and Rechert, who state:

"It is worth mentioning, however, that while dies 9, 15 and 26 and their varieties all have the small bust of Washington, there are small differences in each which show them to be different engravings. In die 9 the front hair is indicated by a series of curved parallel lines, with a similar row behind it, and a single line divides the hair on the back of the head. In die 15 the front hair is divided into six locks, each again divided by a single line; there are five lines in the back hair. In die 26 the front hair shows only 5 locks, and the back hair only four lines."

As stated by Messrs. Tiffany, Bogert & Rechert, the main difference is in the arrangement of the hair. The differences I have noted are:

First, the hair is divided into three distinct parts, i. e., two rows of side locks, consisting of four and five curls each, and the back of the hair formed of *four* straight strands terminating in the queue. The face is slightly upturned, the chin very rounded and deep-cut, and the throat bulges out markedly. In the second bust there is no division of the side locks, the curls overlaying one another. The back of the hair consists of *three* straight strands from the top of the head to the queue. The chin is less rounded, the neck longer and the "Adam's apple" is scarcely visible.

It now remains for me to prove the correctness of what I have termed propositions 3, 4, 5 and 6.

For those who are collectors of United States envelopes, it is really unnecessary to state that the system of line tracing and 10mm. measurement (used in connection with Die 26) applies equally to the Nesbitt THREE CENTS BROWN, issued in 1865, the SIX CENTS ROSE of 1864, and the SIX CENTS PURPLE of 1865. I trust that collectors of United

States envelopes will make a note of this remark and examine their treasures for the different varieties. If they do so, I should not be surprised if they find they have missed a good many. Certainly, henceforward no collection can lay claim to completeness unless these die varieties are included.

The most interesting and probably the most useful part of our inquiry into the varieties of Die 26 is the realization that the system we have developed lends itself with equal ease to the distinction of other die varieties of the Nesbitt type, some of which are well known to specialists, but would not easily be detected by the majority of collectors. In corroboration of this assertion I shall take up the following dies:

(1.) TWO CENTS Jackson, inscribed U. S. POSTAGE; TWO CENTS Jackson, inscribed U. S. POST; issued 1863-4.

(2.) ONE CENT Blue, of 1860.

(3.) THREE CENTS Pink, with outline block capitals; also SIX CENTS, both of 1861.

(4.) THREE CENTS Red, including also the rare TEN CENT Green, with 6 rayed star ornaments at side; both of 1860.

I do not mention separately the FOUR CENTS, the compound of ONE CENT Blue and THREE CENTS Red, because it is evident that whatever applies to the ONE and THREE CENTS applies equally to the compound stamp.

I believe it is admitted by the students of the Nesbitt Dies that the Jackson stamps are exceedingly difficult. In fact, the attempts at classification on the part of the cataloguers have been limited merely to an arbitrary distinction of two sizes which are called Die 1 and Die 2, a distinction which is of little value unless supplemented by other important features. On the other hand, Mr. Harrison describes 8 varieties of U. S. POSTAGE and 40 of U. S. POST.

For several months I had the pleasure of studying these interesting dies with Mr. E. H. Mason, a member of your Society and the unrivalled owner of the choicest and most complete collection of U. S. envelopes. He will certify, I am sure, that we spared no pains and made thousands of measurements trying to classify the multitude of die varieties. The result of such labor is the system of classification represented in the illustration. It appears that a simple line tracing is quite sufficient to divide all Jackson dies into 5 main classes. Having found these, the specialist may go as much further in the detection of minor varieties as his inclination and funds will permit.

For a general catalogue the distinction of 5 main classes is appropriate and ample. The method of differentiation consists in drawing a straight line through two clearly defined points given by the apex of the angle, formed by the inner white upper frame line with the right inner half circle containing the figure of value, and the left extremity of the bust, and extending this line until it cuts the W of TWO. Note that in the first four varieties the line cuts consecutively the first, second, third and last limb of W; while in variety 5 the line may either fall between W and O or cut the latter. The simplicity of this method is its own recommendation.

Let us review the Nesbitt die ONE CENT Blue of 1860. Although in the Catalogue of Stamped Envelopes of the United States Messrs. Tiffany, Bogert and Rechert remark: "There is apparently more difference in the impression of all the varieties of the ONE CENT than in almost any others of the Nesbitt dies," I am persuaded that this is an error. After a diligent search Mr. Harrison has recorded but eleven varieties, and these may well be reduced to six. In Scott's Catalogue the collector is merely informed that the stamp appears with or without a *period* after POSTAGE. Even the important point that the dimensions of these two stamps are 20x24 and 21x25mm., respectively, has been omitted. Neither has it been thought necessary to allude to the fact that the bust points either at G of POSTAGE, between A and G, or at A. The position of the back of the bust with reference to letter U is essential. Calling the limb of U next to the star the first limb, I will state at once that, excepting variety 3, the back of the bust is opposite or nearly opposite the second limb of U.

The illustration exhibits all the measurements for the six main varieties, of which the collector of United States envelopes should possess at least one copy. The 10mm. measurements are taken from the upper end of the first limb of U, from the right end of the horizontal stroke of T of CENT, and from the upper end of the final stroke of N of CENT. Of the stamps with the front of the bust pointing at G there are three sub-varieties, 1a, 1b, 1c. Of those with the front of the bust pointing between A and G there are four sub-varie-

ties, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d. I call attention to the latter. As the distance between U and N is the same as between U and N of variety 1a, the former is often mistaken for the Die 1 of Harrison. I have also noticed this error in the catalogue prepared by Messrs. Collin & Calman. No 10mm. measurements are needed for varieties 4, 5 and 6, of which the first two are the stamps without a period, and the last the rare variety in which the front and back of the bust cuts into the frame. Variety 3 is plainly differentiated by the position of the back of the bust opposite the *first* limb of U.

The next stamp is the well-known THREE CENTS PINK of Nesbitt, issued in 1861, and distinguished by the use of OUTLINE BLOCK LETTERS. In the catalogue of Messrs. Collin and Calman 16 varieties are described and it is stated: "We have concluded that only varieties 5 and 14 are worthy of a place in the list. In variety 5 the top of C of CENTS is straight, and in variety 14 the D of UNITED is rounder and the right hand circle with numeral runs into the outside oval." The commentators conclude: "The others [i. e. varieties], thought existant, are too minute to interest the average collector, while these two are distinguishable at a glance on account of their broken circles." I make free to disagree entirely with this assertion. The fact that the circles are broken is accidental and cannot well be advanced as an important die variety. The system of line tracing combined with a uniform 10mm. distance measurement quickly shows the real varieties.

If a straight edge be laid along the outer vertical line of the final E of THREE, its upward extension will fall to the left of the first S of STATES, will cut the S, will fall between the S and T, or will cut the T, which form the four important classes. I believe that even the general collector will admit that these simple differences are not too minute to be of interest, the more so as they are certainly "distinguishable at a glance."

Bearing these 4 main classes or varieties in mind, the illustration proves that our 10mm. measurement easily adapts itself to the finding and cataloguing of sub-varieties. It is of the utmost importance to observe that *two sizes* of lettering have been used, which are represented. I suggest that even the general catalogues should distinguish these letterings as Dies 1 and 2. It is certainly interesting to find that this die reveals the same general varieties that we have met in our study of the THREE CENTS ROSE of 1864.

The last die upon which I shall comment is the THREE CENTS RED of 1860, having six rayed stars for side ornaments. Messrs. Tiffany, Bogert and Rechert acknowledge five minor varieties, but in Scott's Catalogue no mention is made of any varieties, nor of the different dimensions of the stamp (20x24mm. and 20x24½). Using the 10mm. measurement and noting the position of the bust with reference to letters G and E of POSTAGE we can readily distinguish six varieties. One measurement is made from the top of the highest ray of the left star (a well defined point) in a straight line towards the top of P of POSTAGE; another from the top of P of POSTAGE in a straight line towards the top of G. As in the ONE CENT BLUE, a 10mm. measurement from the top of N of CENTS reveals the different spacings between THREE and CENTS.

Var. 1. The distance between the star and the top of P exceeds 10mm., the stamp measuring 24½mm. The back of the bust points between G and E. P to G is 10mm.

Var. 2. The distance from star to P is 10mm. The S of POSTAGE is noticeably raised. Back of bust points at G.

Var. 3. ST of POSTAGE is very *wide*, but AGE is *close*. The back of bust points at G.

Var. 4. This variety has two characteristics: 1st., distance between star and P exceeds 10mm.: 2d., POSTAGE has an inverted V, usually called A without a bar. Back of bust points at G.

Var. 5. Is generally designated as "Postage short." 10mm. from the top of P reaches the E. The back of bust points at E.

Var. 6. ST of POSTAGE is close and the back of bust points at G. Of this variety there exist three minor varieties which are Mr. Harrison's 1, 3 and 5 respectively. As in each of these the back of bust points at G, I believe the collector will have no difficulty in deciding to which class any given specimen belongs.

I would advise collectors always to ascertain first the dimensions of the die. This I have found a decided advantage in my studies. I may also note here that Mr. Harrison has not mentioned the different spacing between the last E of THREE and the C of CENTS. As he emphasizes this difference in the ONE CENT BLUE, I think it is merely an oversight on his part.

Having laid before you the evidence, I leave it to you, gentlemen, to pronounce the verdict. Have I succeeded in establishing the correctness of my propositions, or have I failed? I am fully conscious that it is next to impossible to do the subject justice in the short time at my disposal, but I venture to hope that the information which I have laid before you may renew the interest of the collectors of United States envelopes, and add greater zest to this branch of philately.

I desire to acknowledge my deep indebtedness to courtesies and assistance which I have received from various persons, especially from Mr. Mason, Mr. Toppan, Mr. Batchelder, Mr. Stone and Mr. Bartels. Certainly, without Mr. Mason's collection, which has been at my disposal throughout my studies of the Nesbitt dies, I would have had great difficulty in obtaining many important die varieties.

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